

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

GERALD WILLIAMS,

Plaintiff,

v.

THOMAS VILSACK,

Defendant.

CASE NO. C19-0444-JCC

MINUTE ORDER

The following Minute Order is made by direction of the Court, the Honorable John C. Coughenour, United States District Judge:

Trial in this matter is currently scheduled for February 7, 2022. (Dkt. No. 77.) On January 7, 2022, the Court issued General Order 01-22, which suspended all in-person civil trials scheduled to occur in the ensuing four weeks. W.D. Wash. General Order 01-22 at 1. The General Order indicates that the Court will revisit these procedures before February 7, 2022. *Id.* at 2.) However, the Omicron variant continues to fuel a surge in COVID-19 infections. Because of this, and because of the timing for when trial is scheduled in relation to when General Order 01-22 is set to expire—if at all—the Court believes that keeping the current trial date risks the chance of either a trial occurring under problematic public health conditions or a last-minute cancellation that could cause great inconvenience to the parties and their counsel.

Accordingly it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

1. The current trial date (Dkt. No. 77) is VACATED.

2. Within seven days of the expiration of the last consecutive General Order providing for a suspension of in-person civil trials, the parties shall file a joint status report proposing additional dates of availability for trial.

3. The parties' joint motions in limine (Dkt. No. 84) are STAYED pending the scheduling of a new trial date.

4. With respect to the current deadlines for the proposed pretrial order (January 24, 2022) and for proposed voir dire, jury instructions, trial briefs, and verdict forms (January 28, 2022), the parties may elect to either:

a. Submit those materials by the current deadlines, so as to facilitate the Court's preparation for trial proceedings once a new trial date is set; or

b. Ignore the current deadlines, in which case the Court will set new ones when it schedules a new trial date.

DATED this 24th day of January 2022.

Ravi Subramanian  
Clerk of Court

s/Sandra Rawski  
Deputy Clerk